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*Remarks on the Carthaginian Deity.*¹ — By W. MAX
MÜLLER, Professor in the R. E. Seminary, Philadel-
phia, Pa.

For long years, Semitists do not seem to have occupied themselves in any way with the strange name of the principal divinity of the Carthaginians, the "Taneit", as scholars used to call her in the period of Gesenius, or Tanit, as it has, somewhat more recently, become the fashion to vocalize her name.² I find a trace of skepticism concerning that name only in O. Meltzer's *Geschichte der Karthager*, where occasionally she is spoken of as "the goddess whom we have become used to calling Tanit." The consonants תַּנַּת, of course, are sufficiently well attested by numerous inscriptions, but if we ask for the reasons of the vocalisation, we have to go down to the infancy of Semitic epigraphics to discover attempts at proving that strange pronunciation, attempts which do not stand the test of any critical examination. The most exhaustive discussion will be found in Gesenius, *Monumenta linguae Phoeniciae*, p. 115 to 117. I enumerate his arguments (repeated Movers, *Phoenizier* I, 625).

1. Strabo XI, 13, p. 532, speaks of the Persian and Armenian goddess 'Avairis (genet. 'Avairidos). For this form variant readings give Tavaïrîdos, hence Eustathius, *ad Iliad.* 14, 295, repeats: Tavaïrîης δαίμων, and Clemens Alex., *Protrept.* p. 43, *Syll.*, speaks of Artaxerxes who first introduced the image of Aphrodite Tanais (τῆς 'Αφροδίτης Tavaïdos); in the latter place, however, the reading seems to be disputed, as in

¹ This paper, after having been read before the American Oriental Society at the meeting in New Haven, in 1906, was mislaid by its author, and not found again by him until the present year. *Ed.*

² Evidently, because the diphthong was felt to be too strongly un-Hebrew. — Tanit is written by Clermont-Ganneau, Lidzbarski, and others up to 1906 [and 1912].

Eustathius, *ad Dion. Perieg.* 846 ("the Armenian goddess Tanaitis or Anaïtis"). It is nowadays no longer necessary to weigh the authority of the codices in every single case for deciding between Anaïtis and Tanaitis, Tanais, for which form Gesenius himself decided. We know now sufficiently well that the Persian chief goddess was called *Anāhita*. Consequently, those forms with a prefixed *t* have no authority and are evidently due to comparative speculations of Greek scholars who wanted what Movers, II, 101 etc., called "the Taurian Artemis," i. e. some connection with the remote river Tanais. The notice about Artaxerxes Mnemon returns then with the correct reading; 'Aneitis, Anaïtis, in Berossus (C. Müller, II, 508), Plutarch, *Artax.* 27, Pausanias III, 16, 6; Pliny 33, 24; Dio Cass. 36, 31, 31, etc.¹ Consequently, no goddess Tanais existed.

2. (Gesen. p. 117). Akerblad is said to have compared the Carthaginian *Tnt* with the Egyptian (!) goddess Neit (Nḥt) "praeposito articulo *ta*." Modern scholars know, of course, that the Egyptian feminine article *t-* (not *ta*) cannot be connected with proper names; such a connection as the good pioneer Akerblad ventured is quite impossible, not to speak of the various other improbabilities of his bold comparison which already Movers rejected (although he strangely kept the conclusions in the form of that vocalisation!).

3. Finally Gesenius desperately referred to proper name like Tennes, Muten-Mythionius; to city names with prefixed *t-* (see below) like Tynis-Tunis, Tingis etc.; even to Libyan names like Masintha, Masinissa, etc. None of these "arguments" deserves now any discussion. Tennes, however, still seemed to be meant in Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*,² I, 235 (Fr. Jeremias): "the divinity TNT, after a Greek personal name to be pronounced Thent". If Jeremias really meant the Sidonian king Tennes, adduced by Gesenius, we ought to demand some plausible etymology for that royal name, for the king cannot have borne the name of the goddess herself. Above all, as long as the worship of TNT is strictly limited to Carthage and its nearest dependencies and cannot

¹ Cp. Movers I, 626. I confess not to have verified every quotation.

be traced epigraphically to Phoenicia,¹ I consider it inadmissible to use an argument from any Phoenician name.

Consequently, the old attempts at vocalizing those 3 consonants fail completely. I regret that, after having destroyed the old theories, I cannot offer any substitute for them; there is hardly any basis for the pronunciation of that enigmatic name (cp. below on Anna). I believe, however, that I can offer at least one small advancement towards its explanation. That "local divinity of the Carthaginians" (δαίμων τῶν Καρχηδονίων) as Polybius calls her, cannot well have had a Semitic name; it is a difficult task to fit her name into Semitic etymologies. Its formation, on the other hand, clearly betrays a Libyan formation. Prefixed *t* (which becomes in the dialects, *th* or *t*, even *ts*) + suffixed *t* or *th* are the usual characteristics of Libyan (I avoid the senseless name "Berber, Berberic") feminines.¹ Cp. e. g. Kabylie *thamdint*, from Arabic *medîne* "city". This formation agrees too remarkably with the divine name TNT to be accidental. Consequently, we have to consider this name as a feminine formation from a root with *n* and one or two weak consonants, among which the *n* may take the first, second or third place, may be doubled or not. At present, it would be merely a frivolous play to enumerate, from the modern Libyan dictionaries, the numerous roots with *n* which a fanciful mind could use for a more or less improbable etymology of T-N-T. I only lay stress on the result that, evidently, the name of that local divinity dates from earlier time than the Phoenician immigration and has been kept untouched by the Carthaginians; as we should indeed expect with the *spiritus loci*.

¹ I do not consider the title "TNT of Lebanon", Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris* I, 19, as a proof of origin in Phoenicia; Lidzbarski, p. 21, assumed with probability that this Lebanon was some locality near Carthage. More important is the first Athenian bilingual mentioning a "Sidonian, 'Abd-TNT", in Greek *Artemidoros*. This would, indeed, point to a Sidonian cult. But why are the inscriptions of Sidon herself absolutely silent about our divinity? Hence I must assume that the name of that Sidonian betrays a relation to Carthage; such wandering merchants and sailors may have claimed various nationalities, even if "Sidonian" does not, in an archaizing way, mean "Carthaginian".

² Those not acquainted with Libyan may consult Hanoteau, *Essai de grammaire Kabyle*, p. 17; his *Grammaire Tamachek*, p. 17, Stumme, *Handbuch des Schülischen von Tazerwalt*, p. 18, etc.

This simple result becomes very complicated only if we compare the name with that of Anna, the sister of Dido. Doubtless Anna is the principal divinity of Carthage herself, as may be seen even from Vergil where Anna plays such a supernumerary part at the side of Dido as we are wont to see with two identical personages, differentiated from synonymous names. Roman writers complete the proof by reporting of that superfluous sister Anna the same things as of Dido, above all seduction by Aeneas, and suicide.¹ Now it would be very easy to connect Anna and TNT by vocalizing the latter name Tannat, Tannath, and treating it as the Libyanized form of Semitic Anna (a Semitic adaptation by stripping a Libyan word of its double feminine mark would lack all analogies and would be very improbable). That explanation has, however, serious difficulties, if we accept the often repeated comparison of Anna with the Hebrew name *Hanna*. Ancient Libyan, indeed, had no *h*, and should be expected to drop the initial of *Hanna* (or to change it to *h*); but I have great doubts if a foreign proper name could be Libyanized by the feminine characteristics. The analogies are very much against this. It would be more plausible to assume that Anna was a Semitic adaptation of an original Libyan **Tannath*, i. e. Anna, originally without initial *h*. It is true, the alleged name of a Punic goddess *Hanna* cannot be proved with certainty epigraphically,² and we need not trouble ourselves much with that suppositional form. Still, I confess not at all to be satisfied with the above explanation: Anna (whatever its initial may be) as a Semitisation of a supposed **Tannath*. I consider this theory not very plausible and would prefer leaving the explanation of the relation of the two names in doubt. A relation seems to exist, but it cannot be determined and explained with sufficient certainty, I fear.

It remains to say a word on the regular titles of our god-

¹ Ovid. *Fasti* III, 523; Varro in Servius, *Aen.* IV, 682; cp. Movers I, 612 who, however, does not notice the identity clearly.

² חנא seems masculine, the well known *Hanno*. Prof. Torrey directs my attention to a seal which he considers Punic, mentioning an עבר-חנא; I feel strong doubts whether this proves to be a female divinity. [The seal was published in this Journal, XXVIII (1907), 354. Its genuineness has been questioned by Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris* III, 69, but on insufficient grounds. *Ed.*]

dess "the mistress TNT (with?) the face of Ba'al", as she is called on so many funerary inscriptions. The last two words (פִּנְיַתָּה) have, so far, remained obscure. I have proposed an explanation, *Mitteilungen der vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft*, 1904, IX, 168, derived from the symbol of the divinity reproduced on the Carthaginian funerary stelae. It appears in a great many fanciful variations, but all these seem finally to go back to the symbol of the *bukranion*, with the solar disk between the crescent shaped horns which evidently symbolize the moon. Hence that combination of symbols of the "*dea coelestis*", which has a wide use in the art of all countries touching the Mediterranean, representing the heaven as a cow, bearing sun and moon upon her head. This agrees well with the designation "face of the heavenly god." The syncretism of two different conceptions of heaven, as a female or (later?) as a male divinity, presents no difficulty.